

NH BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS

7 Eagle Square Suite #300

CONCORD, NH 03301-2412

MONDAY, March 1, 2021

PUBLIC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Puneet Kochhar, DMD, President, the NH Board of Dental Examiners (“Board”), convened a public meeting of the Board on March 1, 2021 at 3:09 pm. Due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor’s Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. There is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor’s Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, it was confirmed that public access to the meeting by telephone or other electronic means was possible. Zoom teleconferencing technology was in use for this electronic meeting.

All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 646 558 8656, or by clicking on the following website address:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86824591032?pwd=eVdnUTFkdmYvaHIyWGR4QzBtU0VvQT09>

Public notice with the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonic instructions have also been provided on the website of the Board at: <https://www.oplc.nh.gov/dental-medicine/index.htm>. Additionally, the public notice indicated to contact Christine Senko at 271-7618 or Christine.Senko@oplc.nh.gov if there were problems with access.

It was noted that no one from the public expressed issues in accessing the meeting platform. In the event the public was unable to access the meeting, the meeting would have been adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that **all votes** taken during this meeting were done by **roll call vote**. The following members announced their presence and confirmed no one else was in the room with them:

- Puneet Kochhar, DMD, President (PK)
- Lisa Scott, RDH (LS)
- Linda Tatarczuch, MSW, Public Member (LT)
- Roger Achong, DMD (RA)
- Jay Patel, DDS (JP)
- Ellen Legg, RDH (EL)
- John Giraldo, DMD (JG)
- Muhenad Samaan, DMD (MS)

Attendees: Christine Senko, Administrator; Jessica Whelehan, Senior Board Administrator; Victoria Davies, Program Specialist

Review of Public Minutes –February 1, 2021: Upon motion by LS and second by JG, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to accept the minutes as submitted.

Update Dental Hygienist Committee (DHC)–Myra Nikitas, RDH reported the following:

- A. Upon motion by LT and seconded by EL, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2021 DHC meeting.
- B. The Committee has received questions regarding online CPR versus live, hands-on CPR. PK and Chris Senko clarified that online CPR is currently being accepted, although the preference is a live class. Myra asked if a clarification could be included with the upcoming 30-day renewal email that will be going out; Chris Senko advised she would see if that was a possibility. Mike Auerbach, with the NH Dental Society, reported that they would be able to send a message out if Chris Senko/Jes Whelehan sent the appropriate language to him.
- C. The Committee has a vacancy. Chris Senko is researching where the appointments might be in the process.

NH Dental Hygiene Association – Myra Nikitas stated the NHDHA is providing two classes on Saturday March 6, 2021; one is about medical emergencies and infection control and the second is about required dental documentation. She also advised they are working on their calendar for the next year.

Dental Society Report – Mike Auerbach, Executive Director, NH Dental Society, provided at the following update:

- The NHDS is preparing its Annual Meeting, offering licensure courses on infection control and emergency management, along with training courses for the entire team. The program will be 12-15 May in an online setting.
- Over the weekend, NHDS became aware that the American Association of Dental Boards has given a top-level sponsorship of its annual meeting to Smile Direct Club. This business recently came before the NH Board of Dental Examiners, seeking its endorsement as a “teledentistry” business. NHDS is concerned because we have expressed concerns about patient safety and adherence to the Dental Practice Act associated with these types of online dentistry businesses, concerns that have not yet been answered by the Board (which I understand is still investigating these concerns).
- Because of the ongoing dental assistant shortage, the NHDS is pursuing a number of innovative training alternatives to the traditional classroom approach. We are developing curricula and programs that will enable online didactic courses and on-the-job clinical components that help foster dental assistant training throughout the state. Dr. Kennell will be discussing one of these programs during her presentation.
- As you may have heard, the ADA and the ADHA last week released the findings of an extensive study on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on dental hygienists. Among the findings were that, thanks to PPE and infection control protocols we espoused early in the pandemic, the transmission rate among dental hygienists across the country was 3.1 percent.
- Two weeks ago, the NHDS testified against HB.444, which would allow the Board of Pharmacy to conduct inspections of dental offices. The NHDS was amenable to an amendment offered that would exempt the Board of Dental Examiners from this bill. The bill is currently under review.

5. Board Office Comments –Chris Senko, Administrator, reported the following:

- A. OPLC website redesign is almost complete and should launch within the next few weeks. Chris advised she would make sure everyone had the new link so that they could view the page.

She also said that IT could join a meeting to help with any content or navigation questions the Board may have.

B. LBA Audit – Chris reported that the Dental Board audit has begun and that information is provided on a regular basis. Chris said she had forwarded the scope of audit to the Board the morning of March 1, 2021.

6. **Discussion – DEN Rule 302.06 Dental Assistant Qualifications** – LS presented concerns regarding DEN 302.06, explaining that she felt there needed to be more detail with regards to continuity and calibration of the instructors. JP discussed the fact that Dental Assistants, whether from a program like NHTI or from other programs, were almost impossible to find north of Concord. LS mentioned that NHTI instructors are putting on classes at satellite locations. PK reminded the Board that the Board has no authority over Dental Assistants or their training. Casey Hannon, a certified Dental Assistant who graduated from and now teaches at NHTI spoke in favor of the quality of Dental Assistants when they complete a program such as the program at NHTI. PK advised that under the current rule there was nothing more that could be done, and asked LS to write up a proposed rule change.

7. **Other New Business and Inquiries** – Melissa Kennell, DMD, provided details for the Dental Assistant Program she is helping to spearhead, speaking again of the shortage of Dental Assistants throughout the whole state, elaborating that practices have actually begun poaching Assistants from other practices. The goal of the program she discussed is to create more Dental Assistants, as per Den 403.07 they can provide these trainings, with an additional lab course for the radiology segment.

8. Licensure and Reports

Dentists (approved licenses)

Agrawal, Priyadarshini, DMD	04624
Al-Ani, Omar DMD	04325
Ibrahim, Mays, DMD	04628
Ilshahuome, Mohamed, DMD	04629
O’Neill, Ava, DMD	04627
O’Neill, Nathan, DMD	04626

Hygienists (approves licenses)

Allison, Caitlyn, RDH	03705
Bentz, Andrea, RDH	03704
Burroughs, Glenda, RDH	03710
Desouza, Kelli, RDH	03713
Horgan, Venessa, RDH	03706
Marie, Hanna, RDH	03714
Mitaev, Natalia, RDH	03709
Redfield, Rachel, RDH	03708
Richard, Deborah, RDH	03707
St. Germain, Jacqueline, RDH	03712
Thomas, Tiana, RDH	03711

Anesthesia/Sedation – None this month

Public Health

- A. The closure of the Easter Seals Oral Health Center was discussed, and it was noted that this was a real hit to the community.

Other Informational

- A. Sameer Dogra, DMD (03726), informed the Board that they had recently acquired a dental office located at 4 Epping Rd. in Exeter, NH, previously owned by Dr. Eugene Neidzeilski. The employees of the office were acquired as well, and will be retained by Dr. Dogra.
- B. Great Smiles, PLLC notified the Board that they would be closing. They advised they were remaining open for emergency visits through February 12, 2021, and all patient records would be forwarded to Garrison Family Dental, located at 803 Central Ave. #5, Dover, NH. Patients were notified of the closure in writing on December 12, 2020.

Scheduled Hearings

- A. The Board heard the case of Christopher Gustafson, RDH. Todd H. Prevett, Esq., Hearings Examiner at OPLC, acted as the Presiding Officer. Christopher Gustafson spoke about his past and discussed his reasons for seeking licensure in NH. After deliberation, and on a motion from PK, and seconded by RA, the Board voted unanimously to approve the license of Christopher Gustafson. Todd Prevett was notified of the Board's decision.

At 5:08 pm, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c), and upon motion by PK, second by LT, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to go out of public session and into non-public session because public disclosure may render a proposed action ineffective or adversely affect the reputation of a person other than a Board member.

At 7:01 p.m., upon motion by EL, and second by RA, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to go out of non-public meeting and into public session.

Dr. Kochhar adjourned the meeting at 7:04 pm.